

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00

NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 IO-10 SAM-01

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R 141630Z APR 75

FM AMEMBASSY NICOSIA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1517

INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA

AMEMBASSY ATHENS

AMEMBASSY LONDON

USMISSION USNATO

USMISSION USUN

DIA WASHDC/DI5

C O N F I D E N T I A L NICOSIA 1339

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT CY GR

SUBJECT: ISSUE OF CLERIDES' RESIGNATION THREAT

REF: NICOSIA 1300

1. SUMMARY: CLERIDES' RESIGNATION THREAT STILL UNRESOLVED, DESPITE WEEKEND "SUPPORT" FROM MAKARIOS, KARAMANLIS. DEBATE OVER ROLE OF CYPRUS CHURCH IN POLITICS HAS COMPOUNDED RESIGNATION ISSUE. TURKS WATCHFUL, WARY OF SPLITS IN GREEK CYPRIOT INTERNAL FRONT. VIENNA TALKS STILL ON, THOUGH NEITHER SIDE EXPECTS MUCH FROM THEM. END SUMMARY.

2. APRIL 11 RETURN OF GOG AMBASSADOR DOUNTAS LED TO CLAIMS BY PRO-CLERIDES PRESS THAT HE BROUGHT BACK MESSAGE FROM KARAMANLIS ASKING CLERIDES NOT REPEAT NOT TO RESIGN AS NEGOTIATOR. APRIL 12, SOME HOURS AFTER MEETING WITH DOUNTAS, ARCHBISHOP ISSUED STATEMENT (FBIS TA130600Z NOTAL) WITH FAINT PRAISE, IMPLICIT CRITICISM OF CLERIDES. STATEMENT (A) CLAIMS BOTH GOG AND ARCHBISHOP BELIEVE IT "IMPERATIVE" THAT CLERIDES
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STAY ON; (B) DISAVOWS CRITICISM, INSINUATION AGAINST "POLITICAL ETHOS AND HONESTY OF MR CLERIDES", BUT (C)

DOES NOT REPEAT NOT REFER TO SUBSTANCE OF ISSUES RAISED
IN CLERIDES' APRIL 1 SPEECH. TEXT ENDS WITH APPEAL TO
AVOID "INTERNAL FEUDS AND DISCORDS", TO SET ASIDE BITTER-
NESS AND DIFFERENCES "CAUSED BY ANY REASONS."

3. DEBATE OVER CHURCH OF CYPRUS' ROLE IN POLITICS HAS ENTERED
CLERIDES CONTROVERSY FOUR-SQUARE. DESPITE PIO DENIAL OF STORY THAT
HOLY SYNOD RECENTLY TRIED TO "BIND" ARCHBISHOP NOT REPEAT
NOT TO ACCEPT ANY SOLUTION EMERGING FROM TALKS, PRESS
CONTINUES ARGUE POINT: PRO-CLERIDES PAPERS CLAIM STORY
TRUE, PRO-MAKARIOS PAPERS DENY IT.

A. INDEPENDENT WEEKLY ALITHEIA APRIL 14 BACKED
CLERIDES VERSION, EDITORIALIZED AGAINST NARROWMINDEDNESS OF
PULPIT (E. G., HISTORICAL COMMITMENT TO "LONG-TERM STRUGGLE")
WHICH HAD BROUGHT GREAT DAMAGE TO CYPRUS. WEEKLY KYPROS
DECLARED SYNOD PROPERLY NO LONGER HAS DECISIVE VOICE IN
POLITICAL MATTERS. CLERIDES' AGHON APRIL 13 COMPLAINED OF EFFORTS
BY PULPIT AND POLITICAL CIRCLES TO MALIGN NEGOTIATOR ON
EVE OF TALKS.

B. BETRAYING SOME CONCERN, LYSSARIDES TA NEA
CALLED ON MAKARIOS TO CLARIFY SYNOD ISSUE.

C. APRIL 12 PAPHOS BISHOP CHRYSOSTOMOS REBUTTED CLERIDES'
EARLIER ASSAULT (REF NICOSIA 1265) WITH STATEMENT WHICH
OPPOSED "TEMPORARY SOLUTION", REAFFIRMED CHURCH'S RIGHT
TO SPEAK OUT ON POLITICAL ISSUES BECAUSE HIERARCHY
ELECTED AS BOTH "RELIGIOUS AND NATIONAL" LEADERS.

4. PARTISAN TREATMENT OF CLERIDES' RESIGNATION HAS
CHANGED SLIGHTLY. PRO-MAKARIOS PHILELEFTHEROS,
APOGEVMATINI ARE CAMPAIGNING AGAINST FOREIGN-INSPIRED
EFFORTS TO RUPTURE INTERNAL FRONT, WEAKEN MAKARIOS'
POSITION: BY IMPLICATION, CLERIDES IS PART OF SUCH
CAMPAIGN. LYSSARIDES' PRESS, AND REBIDLY PRO-MAKARIOS WEEKLY
ELEFTHEROS
LAOS CONTINUE DEMAND CLERIDES' RESIGNATION, BUT HAVE
DROPPED SCURRILOUS PERSONAL ATTACKS. SOME CENTRIST/
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RIGHTIST PRESS DECLARE RESIGNATION ISSUE IS "CLOSED,"
THOUGH PAPERS CLOSEST TO CLERIDES INSIST IT STILL "PENDING."

COMMUNIST HARAVGHI HAS RECENTLY STAYED ABOVE THIS BATTLE.

5. MEANWHILE, DATE FOR POSSIBLE ATHENS SUMMIT IS RECEDING.
PIO APRIL 12 DECLARED THAT INITIATIVE FOR NICOSIA-ATHENS
SUMMIT PRIOR TO TALKS RESTS WITH LATTER. MOST PAPERS,
INCLUDING CLERIDES', NOW AGREE THAT MAKARIOS WILL TRANSIT
ATHENS FOR TALKS ON RETURN FROM KINGSTON COMMONWEALTH CONFERENCE

EARLY MAY. SOME ATHENS PREWS HAVE SAME STORY (REF FBIS AT 111309X NOTAL). (UK HIGH COMMISSION SAYS ARCHBISHOP HAS GIVEN UP IDEA OF LEAVING ISLAND VIA AKROTIRI SBA.)

6. LOCAL TURK PRESS FOLLOWING LATEST CLERIDES-MAKARIOS RIFT CLOSELY. DENKTASH'S ZAMAN APRIL 14 DOUBTS THAT CLERIDES WILL HAVE FULL AUTHORITY FOR VIENNA TALKS. OTHER PAPERS IN RECENT DAYS HAVE QUESTIONED UTILITY OF TALKS WHILE CLERIDES UNDER CLOUD.

7. COMMENT: APPEARS THAT ATHENS TRIED TO PATCH UP GROSSER RIFTS IN INTERNAL GREEK CYPRIOT FRONG THROUGH SUPPORTIVE MESSAGES TO CLERIDES FROM KARAMANLIS, MAKARIOS. THANKS TO STRONG BACKGROUND EFFORTS OF UNSYG AND HIS SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE, IT NOW LOOKS RELATIVELY CERTAIN THAT CLERIDES WILL GO TO VIENNA THOUGH LOCALLY NEITHER SIDE EXPECTS MUCH FROM TALKS. GREEK DCM TOLD US OVER WEEKEND THAT OPTIMUM RESULT WHICH GREEK SIDE LOOKS FOR IS DEAL TO CONTINUE INTERCOMMUNAL TALKS ON ISLAND. END COMMENT. CRAWFORD

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